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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/535,364

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David J Wortman

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05/09/2008

NOVAK DRUCE DELUCA + QUIGG LLP

1300 EYE STREET NW

SUITE 1000 WEST TOWER

WASHINGTON, DC 20005

EXAMINER

EVANS, ERIN LINDSAY

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

4172

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

05/09/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary**Application No.**

10/535,364

Applicant(s)

WORTMAN ET AL.

Examiner

ERIN EVANS

Art Unit

4172

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 March 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-73 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-73 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/ICE)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372.

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claim(s) 1-29, drawn to a method of forming a thermal barrier coating (TBC) system comprising depositing a bond coat on a substrate followed by depositing a thermal insulating layer on said bond coat.

Group II, claim(s) 30-32, 40-42, 44-49, 51-54, and 56-58, drawn to a deposition apparatus comprising a depositing means.

Group III, claim(s) 33-39, 43, 50, 55, and 59, drawn to a directed vapor deposition apparatus comprising: a chamber, an evaporant source, a carrier gas, and an energetic beam.

Group IV, claim(s) 60-73, drawn to a thermal barrier coating (TBC) system comprising a substrate, a bond coat, and a thermal insulating layer.

2. The inventions listed as Groups I and Groups IV do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: the common technical feature in all groups is the substrate with bond coat and insulating layer. This element cannot be a special technical feature under PCT Rule 13.2 because the element is shown in the prior art. US Patent 6,153,313 teaches the use of nickel aluminide coating systems for use on substrates such as turbines or combustors. The coating employs an intermetallic bond coat alloyed with, for instance, Ti, Ta, or Zr, and an insulating layer of zirconia stabilized with yttria, ceria, or oxides.

3. The inventions listed as Groups II-III do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: when the depositing means of group II is a directed vapor deposition apparatus, the common technical

feature in all groups is a directed vapor deposition apparatus. This element cannot be a special technical feature under PCT Rule 13.2 because the element is shown in the prior art. US Patent 5,534,314 teaches the use of a directed vapor deposition apparatus for coating a substrate.

4. The inventions of Groups I (or IV) and II (or III) do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because, under PCT Rule 13.2, they lack the same or corresponding special technical features for the following reasons: they contain no common technical features. Because group I or IV does not require a same apparatus having all the claimed features found in group II or III, it is clear that there is no features in common between these inventions.

5. Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species or invention to be examined even though the requirement may be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected invention.

The election of an invention or species may be made with or without traverse. To preserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse.

6. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

7. The examiner has required restriction between product and process claims.

Where applicant elects claims directed to the product, and the product claims are subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims that depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be considered for rejoinder. All claims directed to a nonelected process invention must require all the limitations of an allowable product claim for that process invention to be rejoined.

In the event of rejoinder, the requirement for restriction between the product claims and the rejoined process claims will be withdrawn, and the rejoined process claims will be fully examined for patentability in accordance with 37 CFR 1.104. Thus, to be allowable, the rejoined claims must meet all criteria for patentability including the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 101, 102, 103 and 112. Until all claims to the elected product are found allowable, an otherwise proper restriction requirement between product claims and process claims may be maintained. Withdrawn process claims that are not commensurate in scope with an allowable product claim will not be rejoined. See MPEP § 821.04(b). Additionally, in order to retain the right to rejoinder in accordance with the above policy, applicant is advised that the process claims should be amended during prosecution to require the limitations of the product claims. **Failure to do so may result in a loss of the right to rejoinder.** Further, note that the prohibition against double patenting rejections of 35 U.S.C. 121 does not apply where the restriction requirement is withdrawn by the examiner before the patent issues. See MPEP § 804.01.

Election of Species

8. This application contains claims directed to the following patentably distinct species:
- a. Group A, claims 1-11, drawn to a method of forming a thermal barrier coating system comprising depositing a Ti, Ti alloy, or a combination thereof as a bond coat on a substrate, followed by depositing Zr, Zr alloy, TiN, TiC, TiN alloy, TiC alloy, or a combination thereof as a thermal insulating layer on said bond coat.
 - b. Group B, claims 12-14, drawn to a method of forming a thermal barrier coating system comprising depositing a Zr, Zr alloy, or a combination thereof as a bond coat on a substrate, followed by depositing ZrC, ZrC alloy, or a combination thereof as a thermal insulating layer on said bond coat.
 - c. Group C, claims 15-20, drawn to a method of forming a thermal barrier coating system comprising depositing a Nb, Nb alloy, Ta, Ta alloy, or a combination thereof as a bond coat on a substrate, followed by depositing at least one of an oxide or a carbide or a combination thereof as a thermal insulating layer on said bond coat.
 - d. Group D, claims 21-24, drawn to a method of forming a thermal barrier coating system comprising depositing at least one of stainless steel, composite of stainless steel, or alloy of stainless steel, or a combination thereof as a bond coat

on a substrate, followed by depositing a thermal insulating layer on said bond coat.

e. Group E, claims 25-29, drawn to a method of forming a thermal barrier coating system comprising depositing at least one intermetallic as a bond coat on a substrate, followed by depositing a thermal insulating layer on said bond coat.

9. The species are independent or distinct because claims to the different species recite the mutually exclusive characteristics of such species. In addition, these species are not obvious variants of each other based on the current record.

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted.

There is an examination and search burden for these patentably distinct species due to their mutually exclusive characteristics. The species require a different field of search (e.g., searching different classes/subclasses or electronic resources, or employing different search queries); and/or the prior art applicable to one species would not likely be applicable to another species; and/or the species are likely to raise different non-prior art issues under 35 U.S.C. 101 and/or 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include (i) an election of a species to be examined even though the requirement may be traversed (37 CFR 1.143) **and (ii) identification of the claims encompassing the elected species**, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a

claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered nonresponsive unless accompanied by an election.

The election of the species may be made with or without traverse. To preserve a right to petition, the election must be made with traverse. If the reply does not distinctly and specifically point out supposed errors in the election of species requirement, the election shall be treated as an election without traverse. Traversal must be presented at the time of election in order to be considered timely. Failure to timely traverse the requirement will result in the loss of right to petition under 37 CFR 1.144. If claims are added after the election, applicant must indicate which of these claims are readable on the elected species.

Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the species unpatentable over the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other species.

Upon the allowance of a generic claim, applicant will be entitled to consideration of claims to additional species which depend from or otherwise require all the limitations of an allowable generic claim as provided by 37 CFR 1.141.

Conclusion

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1. Claims 1-73 are subject to a restriction requirement.
2. No claim is allowed.
3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ERIN EVANS whose telephone number is (571)270-5354. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 7:30am to 5pm, EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vickie Kim can be reached on (571)272-0579. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Vickie Kim/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art
Unit 4172

/ERIN EVANS/
29 April 2008
Examiner, Art Unit 4172

